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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Mr. William F. Caton, Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
1919 M Street, N.W., Room 222  
Washington, D.C. 20554

Re: CC Docket No. 96-45  
Federal-State Joint Board on Universal  
Service: Establishment of Rural Task Force

Dear Mr. Caton:

In accordance with the Commission's Public Notice of September 17, 1997, the National Telephone Cooperative Association (NTCA) nominates three individuals for appointment by the Joint Board to the incumbent LEC positions on the Rural Task Force. The individuals and their affiliations are listed below in alphabetical order. More detailed biographical information on each, demonstrating their qualifications for these positions, is attached.

Joan Mandeville	Assistant Manager Blackfoot Telephone Cooperative Missoula, Montana
Michael Pinquoch	Controller Great Plains Communications, Inc. Blair, Nebraska
David Schmidt	General Manager Heart of Iowa Telecommunications Cooperative Union, Iowa

In addition, NTCA endorses the nominations of Robert Schoonmaker by GVNW, John Smith by the Rural Telecommunications Group, and Jack H. Rhyner nominated by the Alaska Telephone Association for the Alaska/insular position.

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October 15, 1997  
Page Two

The nominees are highly qualified to address the issues involving establishment of a forward looking cost mechanism for rural telephone companies. They are intimately familiar with the practical requirements for a small company to provide rural areas with high quality modern telecommunications, consistent with the Commission's universal service requirements.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Cosson", written in a cursive style.

David Cosson  
Vice President, Legal and Industry

Enclosures

**Rural Task Force  
Professional Qualifications for Nominee**

<b>Nominee:</b>	<b>Joan Mandeville</b> Assistant Manager
<b>Contact Information:</b>	Blackfoot Telephone Cooperative, Inc. 1221 N. Russell Street Missoula, MT 59802-1898  Phone: (406) 541-5300 Fax: (406) 54105333
<b>Employment History:</b>	1982 - 1989 Montana Public Service Commission 1980 - 1997 Montana Telephone Association 1997 - Present Blackfoot Telephone Cooperative
<b>Nominee Category:</b>	Incumbent Local Exchange Carriers (ILECs) serving rural areas with annual operating revenues of \$40 million or less.
<b>Professional Qualifications:</b>	Bachelor's Degree in Accounting from Carroll College, 1980. Current non-practicing Certified Public Accountant Certificate. Fifteen years' experience in the telecommunications industry.
<b>Regulatory Experience:</b>	<p>While working for the Montana Public Service Commission, Ms Mandeville was a member of a small team that developed all technical telecommunications issues and produced recommendations to the Commissions on all regulatory matters necessary to establish carrier access charges, to implement the divestiture of AT&amp;T, and to implement other pricing and policy changes.</p> <p>Ms. Mandeville was responsible for all of the regulatory work for the Montana Telephone Association. She frequently testified as an expert witness before the Montana Commission. In her present position, Ms. Mandeville is responsible for the regulatory work of Blackfoot Telephone Cooperative and its subsidiaries, Clark Fork Telecommunications (an ILEC) and Montana Wireless (a CLEC).</p>
<b>Background - Policy Issues:</b>	Ms. Mandeville has a broad background in telecommunications policy issues. She had primary responsibility in the revenue requirement bureau for all telecommunications policy issues. Additionally, she facilitated the Commission's Task Force on Interconnection Issues for Small Companies. Her work with the

Montana Telephone Association included representing Montana's independent telephone companies in a wide variety of policy forums including Montana Commission proceedings, the state legislature, the Governor's Blue Ribbon Telecommunications Task Force, and testifying before a Congressional sub-committee concerning universal service issues. Ms. Mandeville prepared several sets of comments to the Federal Communications Commission on universal service proceedings and assisted in writing Montana's universal service statutes.

**Background -  
Economics:**

Ms. Mandeville's work at the Montana Commission included a variety of proceedings that addressed pricing issues. These proceedings included establishment of carrier access charges for all local exchange companies and other pricing issues for large local exchange companies. Parties engaged in vigorous debate about long run incremental costing methodology and reconciliation between the outcome of LRIC studies and total revenue requirements.

Ms. Mandeville administered Montana's carrier access charge pool for small companies during her tenure at the Montana Telephone Association. This work included preparing all regulatory filings and testifying on a variety of pricing issues.

**Background -  
Engineering:**

Ms. Mandeville's responsibilities for regulation and pricing issues requires ongoing familiarity and education in basic telecommunications network operations. She has attended a variety of seminars and short courses on telecommunications technology. If nominated, Ms. Mandeville will work closely with Blackfoot Telephone's engineering department which is managed by a Professional Engineer with over 25 years of telecommunications experience.

**Representation  
of a Variety of  
Economic, Social,  
and Geographic  
Interests:**

Ms. Mandeville has a substantial history of working closely with all of Montana's telecommunications industry participants. Her work with the Montana Telephone Association established a reasonably detailed knowledge about all of Montana's small companies. These companies face a wide variety of challenges, diverse geographical characteristics and diverse local economies. Additionally, several of Montana's rural companies, including Blackfoot Telephone, serve Native American Reservations.

## Rural Task Force Nominee Professional Qualifications

**NOMINEE:**

Michael Pinguoch  
Controller  
Great Plains Communications, Inc.  
P.O. Box 500  
Blair, Nebraska 68008-0500  
402 429 9511

**Category:**

Incumbent Local Exchange Carrier with less than \$40 million  
Annual Operating Revenues

**Professional  
Qualifications:**

Bachelor of Business Administration, Pacific Lutheran  
University  
12 Years with Ernst and Young Telecommunications  
Consulting Group  
15 years with Great Plains Communications, Inc. As  
Controller he is responsible for all activities of the  
Accounting Department, Rates and Tariffs for local and state  
and interstate access service, and the Information Systems  
Department. In this capacity, he deals with all aspects of  
telecommunications, separations, revenues and accounting.

**Knowledge of  
Policy Issues**

As consultant and subsequently controller, Mr. Pinguoch has  
been actively involved in the major regulatory policy issues  
over the last twenty five years. He has been a member of  
the USTA Regulatory Issues and Advocacy Committee and  
is currently a member of the OPASTCO Separations and  
Access Committee, of which he is Past Chairman. This  
committee develops and directs OPASTCO regulatory filings  
with the FCC. He is also a member of the Universal Service  
Task Force appointed by the Nebraska Public Service  
Commission. At Great Plains he is responsible for  
management, development and coordination of issues  
related to universal service, access reform and  
interconnection.

**Knowledge of  
Rural Issues**

Great Plains provides modern telecommunications service to  
26, 000 subscribers in exclusively rural services areas  
extending over a large portion of Nebraska. Mr. Pinguoch is  
intimately familiar with the challenges of providing this  
service and the technology employed to provide it.

**Rural Task Force  
Professional Qualifications for Nominee**

**NOMINEE:**                      **David L. Schmidt**  
General Manager

**NOMINEE COMPANY:**    Heart of Iowa Telecommunications Cooperative  
502 Maine Street, P.O. Box 130  
Union, IA 50258-0130  
515-486-2211; Fax 515-486-2205

**NOMINEE ADDRESS:**    P.O. Box 156  
Union, IA 50258-0156  
515-486-2211

**NOMINEE CATEGORY:**    Incumbent Local Exchange Carrier (ILEC) with less than \$40  
Million Annual Operating Revenues

**EMPLOYMENT HISTORY:** 1960 - 1980 U.S. Marine Corps  
1982 - Current, Heart of Iowa Telecommunications Cooperative

**PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS:** 16 Accounting Credits Virginia Community College.  
General Manager for two independent telephone companies.

**RELATED INDUSTRY PARTICIPATION:** Member of the TRS Advisory Council for NECA  
which recommends rates for TRS service. Chairman of the Iowa Telecommunications  
Association Regulatory Committee and a board member and past President of the National  
Telephone Cooperative Association (NTCA)

**KNOWLEDGE OF POLICY ISSUES:** As past President and Board member of NTCA since  
1988, Mr. Schmidt has been fully involved in the major policy issues. As a member of the TRS  
Advisory Council, he works with IXC's, State Commissioner, State TRS provider, members of the  
hearing and speech impaired community and other representatives. As a former member of the  
Union-Whitten School Board, he is well aware of the universal service needs of rural schools.

**KNOWLEDGE OF RURAL ISSUES:** As a manager of both a rural cooperative and rural  
commercial company, Mr. Schmidt is keenly aware of the needs of rural farmers, businesses and  
residential subscribers of Iowa.

**KNOWLEDGE OF ENGINEERING ISSUES:** Two exchanges of the cooperative that Mr.  
Schmidt is managing have just completed putting fiber in the loop to within 18K feet of each  
rural subscriber. He has final authority on all technology that is employed in the two companies  
that he manages.

**KNOWLEDGE OF ECONOMICS:** In his role as a manager, Mr. Schmidt has the practical experience of putting, as they say, "the rubber to the road" when it comes to ensuring that everything within the companies are done on a economical basis. He is also a member of the Board of Directors of Security State Bank.

**KNOWLEDGE OF SPECIAL CONCERNS:** After working on the TRS Advisory Council, ITA Regulatory Committee, NTCA's Board of Directors, and managing two independent telephone companies, Mr. Schmidt is keenly aware of the issues facing citizens in rural America and the affects that they have on rural life.

Chairman Reed E. Hundt  
Federal Communications Commission  
1919 M Street, N.W., Room 814-0101  
Washington, D.C. 20554

Commissioner James H. Quello  
Federal Communications Commission  
1919 M Street, N.W., Room 802-0106  
Washington, D.C. 20554

Commissioner Rachelle B. Chong  
Federal Communications Commission  
1919 M Street, N.W., Room 844-0105  
Washington, D.C. 20554

Commissioner Susan Ness  
Federal Communications Commission  
1919 M Street, N.W., Room 832-0104  
Washington, D.C. 20554

International Transcription Service  
1231 20th Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20036

Ms. Astrid Carlson  
Federal Communications Commission  
2100 M Street, N.W. 8th Floor  
Washington, D.C. 20554

David Baker, Chairman  
Georgia Public Service Commission  
162 State Office Building  
244 Washington Street, S.W.  
Atlanta, GA 30334-5701

Ann Dean  
Maryland Public Service Commission  
6 Paul Street, 16th Floor  
Baltimore, MD 21202-6806

The Honorable Laska Schoenfelder  
Commissioner  
South Dakota Public Utilities Commission  
State Capitol  
500 East Capitol Street  
Pierre, South Dakota 57501-5070

The Honorable Julia Johnson  
Commissioner  
Florida Public Service Commission  
Capital Circle Office Center  
2540 Shumard Oak Blvd.  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0850

Martha S. Hogerty  
Public Counsel for the State of Missouri  
P.O. Box 7800  
Harry S. Truman Building, Room 250  
Jefferson City, MO 65102

Charles Bolle  
South Dakota Public Utilities  
Commission  
State Capitol, 500 E. Capital Avenue  
Pierre, South Dakota 57501-5070

Bridget Duff, State Staff Chair  
Florida Public Service Commission  
2540 Shumard Oak Blvd.  
Gerald Gunter Building  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0850

Philip F. McClelland  
Pennsylvania Office of Consumer  
Advocate  
1425 Strawberry Square  
Harrisburg, PA 17120



Tiane Sommer  
Georgia Public Service Commission  
244 Washington Street, S.W.  
Atlanta, GA 30334-5701

Rowland Curry  
Texas Public Utility Commission  
1701 North Congress Avenue  
P.O. Box 13326  
Austin, TX 78701

Ms. Sheryl Todd  
Universal Service Branch  
Accounting and Audits Division  
Common Carrier Bureau  
2100 M Street, N.W., Room 8611  
Washington, D.C. 20554

H. Russell Frisby, Jr., Chairman  
Maryland Public Service Commission  
16th Floor, 6 Paul Street  
Baltimore, MD 21202-6806